

Budgets, Boards, and Binders— Another PBD Cycle

by Captain Steve MacLeod

Once again the Air Force budget process has closed with a fast-paced Program Budget Decision (PBD) cycle. The PBD cycle—a significant component of the Planning, Programming, and Budgeting System—begins with the submission of the Budget Estimates Submission (BES) in September and continues through final development of the President's Budget in January. During this period, the USD Comptroller reviews the BES, holds budget hearings, and proposes detailed adjustments to the Services' budgets by issuing PBDs. OSD typically gives the Services 48-72 hours to analyze and respond to the adjustments proposed in a PBD. The Services either accept the adjustment (sometimes with accompanying comments) or object by preparing a reclama letter that specifies the reason for their disagreement. SAF/FMB is responsible for all Air Force responses to PBDs. The Deputy Secretary of Defense reviews the Service responses and makes final decisions on all PBDs.

Team Budget's Budget Programs Directorate (SAF/FMBP) spearheads the Air Force PBD process, with its permanent team supplemented by three MAJCOM augmentees and an Air Force Intern. SAF/FMBP was in high gear from September through the end of the year, as its PBD team received, analyzed, and distributed over 130 PBDs to dozens of Air Staff and MAJCOM points of contact (mostly within 30 minutes of receipt from OSD). The team also managed the Air Force PBD database, built and maintained PBD smart books for the FM leadership, and worked closely with budget analysts to prepare FMB leaders for Air Force Board meetings, where the Air Force corporately approves strategies for responding to individual PBDs. Finally, the SAF/FMBP team edited, coordinated, and hand-delivered all PBD responses to OSD. Throughout the process, SAF/FMBP kept the Air Staff and MAJCOMs informed using the PBD telephone hotline and e-mail delivery of daily and weekly PBD status documents.

The PBD cycle offered non-stop action for Team Budget again this year. Here are some photo highlights of the process as seen from the Air Force's "PBD Ops Center."



Team Budget's starting line up for this year's PBD cycle—Maj Chase Fiquett (USAFE/FM), Ms Becky Harris (AFMC/FM), Lt Col Joe Ward, Maj Tom Reilly, Capt Clay Bridges, and Lt Col Carl Schweinfurth (SAF/FMBP), Capt Al Richardson (AETC/FM), and Capt Steve MacLeod (Air Force Intern Program).



Maj Gen Stringer and the MAJCOM augmentees discuss PBD issues with Gen Ryan (CSAF).



PBD Augmentees show off their handcrafted thank-you plaques—their reward for three months of hard work.

Appreciation to Treasury Department

Mr Robert F. Hale presented a plaque to the Department of Treasury, Mr. Richard Gregg, for funding the test of a Stored Value Card (SVC) at Lackland AFB TX. Treasury, Lackland AFB, and the NationsBank worked together with DFAS-DE to eliminate an old payroll system using the



Lt Paleo, SVC Project Officer; Mr Gary Grippo, Department of the Treasury SVC Office; Ms Bettsey Lane, Assist Commissioner for Federal Finance, Department of the Treasury; Mr Richard Gregg, Commissioner for Federal Finance, Department of the Treasury; and Mr Robert F. Hale, SAF/FM.



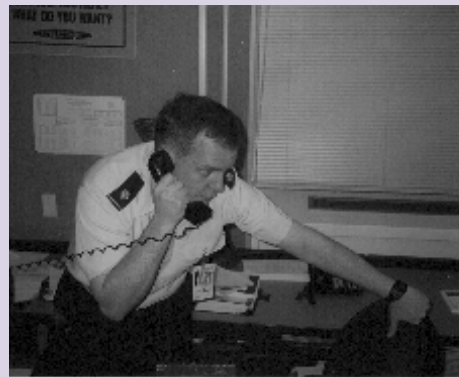
Lt Paleo, Lackland SVC Project Officer; Mr Hale, SAF/FM; and Lt Col Don Davis (Comptroller, Lackland AFB TX).

technology of VISA cash to pay over 30,000 basic military trainees at Lackland AFB. NationsBank credited Mr Hale for a very successful and economical test of SVC technology. This was the largest SVC test in the US. Lackland will continue to pay all new recruits with the SVC after the one-year test period ends in June 1999.

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Lt Col Ward and Capt Richardson discuss that day's Air Force Board PBD update briefing.



Maj Reilly scans his monitor to confirm PBD numbers for Gen Stringer.